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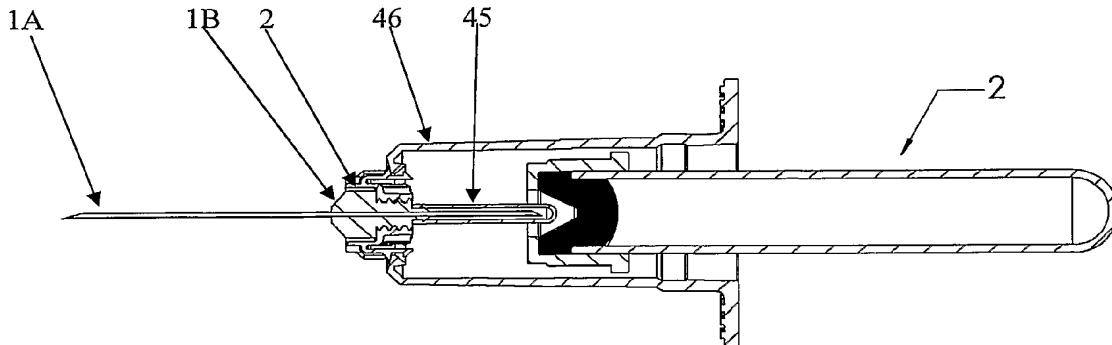
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(54) Title: IMPROVEMENTS TO A BLOOD COLLECTION DEVICE



(57) Abstract: A blood collection device comprises an open ended syringe like housing (10) into which a vacutainer can be inserted. The front of the device contains a needle holder (11) and a double ended needle (12). The needle holder can be decoupled from the housing and retracted into the device but only after the vacutainer (13) has been removed and a separate needle retraction device (28) has been inserted into the open end of the housing and pushed against the inner end of the needle holder. The needle retraction device comprises a hollow body which is under vacuum and which has an open end closed by a piston (5). The piston functions to decouple the needle holder from the blood collection device and lock the needle holder and the attached contaminated needle is sucked back into the hollow body to render the needle safe.

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